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INFO RUCNCOM/EC CARICOM COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 1051  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0504  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L GEORGETOWN 000363

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/11/2017  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [GY](#) [VE](#)  
SUBJECT: NEW VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR STILL A NO SHOW

Classified By: Ambassador David M. Robinson for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

11. (C) Dario Morandy Figuera, publicly announced last month by Venezuela's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) as the new Ambassador to Guyana, has still not formally arrived in Guyana. Although he did visit Guyana during the recent Rio Group Summit, he had to return to Caracas as the GoG had yet to extend agreement for his appointment. Guyana's MFA Director General, Ambassador Elizabeth Harper, told DCM she was informally aware that Morandy had been in Guyana, and was not comfortable with his visit before the Cabinet had met to discuss agreement. She was surprised to learn that Venezuelan MFA had posted Morandy's appointment on its web site a month earlier and let on that the GoG knows virtually nothing about him. However, a Venezuelan artist and restaurateur who has settled in Georgetown is from the same town as Morandy and described him as "smart" and "pragmatic" and stated that he maintained a very good reputation as the Mayor of their town.

12. (C) Fernando Rincon, current Venezuelan Charge to Guyana, told Poloff more than a month ago that he would be permanently leaving country "within the next few days" in order to make room for the new ambassador. Although he has attended many farewell parties and good-bye dinners, Rincon is still here and the newly appointed ambassador is nowhere to be found. Rincon has represented Venezuela as Charge in Guyana for more than seven years-- Venezuela's previous Ambassador to Guyana never actually resided in country, choosing instead to live and work in Caracas. It remains to be seen whether Figuera will do the same.

13. (C) COMMENT: This is yet another sign of the strange diplomatic relationship Guyana has with Venezuela. Between the on-going border dispute, Guyana's inexplicable support of Venezuela for the UNSCR seat, Chavez's recent unexplained no show at the RIO Summit, and their newly signed PetroCaribe deal, they can't seem to decide whether they are friends, foes or simply neighbors doing their best to get along.  
Robinson